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ABSTRACT

This report of the Basic Studies National Field Task Force is one of six reports by as many task forces on the improvement and reform of American education. The report begins with an introduction and alternative definitions of "basic studies." In section 3, the history of basic studies in American culture and education is traced as a prelude to a discussion of basic studies and educational reform in section 4. In section 5, of implementing change and educational reform are discussed; examples of successful reform projects are noted and briefly described in section 6. The seventh section of the report discusses basic studies in relation to teacher education. The eighth section stresses the need for continuing review of basic studies and their role in education. The recommendations of the task force include (a) the development of a national system of regional basic studies councils which will constitute the design and evaluation elements for specified Office of Education (OE) programs, (b) the provision of funds by OE or the National Institute of Education to permit those involved in basic studies to engage more regularly in the assessment and strengthening of the contributions of their fields to the process of education, and (c) implementation of joint agency planning to draw upon the basic studies in the design and evaluation of programs. (HMD)

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WORKING TOGETHER:

The Final Report and Recommendations of the
BASIC STUDIES
NATIONAL FIELD TASK FORCE
on the
IMPROVEMENT AND REFORM OF AMERICAN EDUCATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
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In 1972 the U.S. Office of Education funded six independent National Field Task Forces on the Improvement and Reform of American Education. The names of these task forces are:

Administration and Supervision
Basic Studies
Community
Council of Chief State School Officers
Higher Education
Teachers

This publication presents the final report and recommendations of the Basic Studies task force. Reports and recommendations of the other task forces are published separately. These reports and recommendations do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Office of Education, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Office of Education should be inferred.

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FOREWORD

In its continuing effort to develop programs which are more responsive to local needs, the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Systems of the U.S. Office of Education (OE) established six field task forces in early 1972 to contribute directly to its intensified efforts to help improve the Nation's school systems and the preparation of the people who staff them. These new groups, appropriately called the Field Task Forces on Improvement and Reform of American Education represented a major commitment by the OE to involve people, institutions, and organizations in a continuing appraisal of its existing national training programs and in the development of alternative program strategies.

The creation of the Field Task Forces was a significant step in OE's efforts to build more effective mechanisms for utilizing the best of the wisdom and experience of its funded training projects and persons on the educational firing line. This particular effort built strongly on the work of Task Force 72,[1] under the leadership of Dr. Allen Schmieder, which directly involved the contributions of over 10,000 educators in the development of its reports and recommendations.

The need for and desirability of such Windows to the Bureaucracy[2] is reflected in the enthusiastic response from the Nation to this call to action. The Task Forces, whose members were nominated by a wide range of education personnel and groups from OE-sponsored programs and projects, included representatives from organizations which collectively have several million members. All major geographic regions and almost all racial and ethnic groups were represented in a rich variety of personnel embracing such committed leaders as the White House Teacher of the Year, the President of the American Counseling and Guidance Association, the President of the National Council on Anthropology and Education, the Chairman of the National Conference on English Education, the head of the Black Caucus of the National Education Association, the

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[1] A task force organized in early 1971 by the former Bureau of Educational Personnel Development (later National Center for the Improvement of Educational Systems and now the Division of Educational Systems Development, Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education) to examine the implications of training complexes, protocol and training materials, the OE-commissioned Elementary Teacher Training Models, and competency-based teacher education for educational reform and for future programing affecting educational personnel.

[2] The title of a publication of the National Advisory Council of Education Professions Development which calls for a much greater involvement of people in the field in the development of national education program policy.

Director of the Education Division of the National Conservation Foundation, the President of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, the Leadership Training Institute Directors, and the Director of the Schools Division of the National Science Foundation. In the Field Task Forces, too, were to be found classroom teachers, parents, community activists, administrators, and others without formal title who by their involvement in training projects displayed a heavy personal stake and a deep-seated commitment to change.

But all of the members, who formed vested interest group concerns, were selected in the hope that their recommendations would reflect their personal wisdom as well as the best of the training program viewpoints and policies of their groups.

The Task Forces had three major purposes: (1) to make recommendations regarding how best to use discretionary training funds for the improvement of the quality of American education, (2) to help develop specific training strategies for the improvement of educational systems through more effective development of educational personnel, and (3) to show the way to a more effective communication system between the national Federal offices, regional offices, State offices and their constituencies.

The Field Task Forces completed their respective studies in the Fall of 1973. Their reports and recommendations reflect their reactions to the state of improvement and reform in American education as it existed at that time. Many changes have occurred since then--as a result of steps taken by the Administration, by the Congress, and by the educational community. Although some of this material is therefore necessarily dated, so much of it is still current and useful that I feel that these reports will prove valuable not only today but in the future. Although they do not necessarily reflect OE positions and policies, they contain the opinions of knowledgeable and dedicated men and women. With this in mind, I commend them to you most earnestly.

Washington, D.C.
May 1974

William L. Smith
Director, Teacher Corps
(formerly Associate Commissioner
of the National Center for the
Improvement of Educational Systems)

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Basic Studies Task Force was established by the U.S. Office of Education in May 1972, as one of six advisory groups asked to make recommendations on the development of educational programs to the National Center for Improvement of Educational Systems. Other task forces represented the special interests of administration and supervision, Chief State School Officers, the community, higher education, and teachers. The Basic Studies Task Force brought together specialists in anthropology, conservation, English and foreign languages, geography, history, reading, and science to examine the role of basic studies in the school curriculum, in pre- and in-service preparation of teachers for the schools, and in program planning by the Office of Education.

Treated in this report is only what might be called "formal education," administered by the formal educational system, supported by the taxpayers' dollars, and consisting largely, though not entirely, of interactions in a specially designed setting, a school, directed by a person with special training in education, a teacher. In our view, this formal educational system has the principal responsibility for instruction in the basic studies. It is the purpose of this report to set forth what we believe the term "basic studies" implies; give reasons why no program for educational reform can succeed without adequate attention to the basic studies, their place in the curriculum, how they are taught and to what ends; and to offer a number of recommendations for consideration by the public, the U.S. Office of Education, teacher training institutions, professional associations, and schools and school administrations.

It is the position of this task force that the basic studies are integral both internally and externally to educational reform. Internally, they continue to serve as the curriculum nucleus for the skills and attitudes acquired from them which are necessary for any learning to occur, whether the learning or learning environment is traditional or highly experimental. Externally, they serve to improve the thinking about the quality of schools, to provide the indicators for formative evaluation, and to stand as a significant measure of what the student has learned. No feasible substitute has been offered for these subjects nor can any educational innovation or arrangement be developed without a knowledge of the goals, strategies, and values of these subjects.

II. ON DEFINING BASIC STUDIES

From its first meeting in June 1972, the Basic Studies Task Force has wrestled with the seemingly insurmountable problem of providing an accurate, inclusive definition of the "Basic Studies." Any definitions would first have to be acceptable to those in the various disciplines and subject matter areas who prepare teachers and develop the theoretical base for curricula and actual curriculum materials. Any definition would also have to be acceptable to classroom teachers, community leaders, school administrators, and Office of Education personnel involved either in the daily conduct of the schools or in the national effort to improve the quality of American education. The difficulties experienced by the members of the task force were shared by curriculum designers, classroom teachers, college administrators, and others who participated in one or more of the monthly 2-day working sessions.

Our problem of definition was not the result of inadequate study of current and past Federal programs involving the basic studies. It was based not on an insufficient knowledge or review of school programs, teacher education programs, or educational reforms proposed by academicians and others. And it was certainly not the result of any reluctance to raise or attempt to answer hard questions about the place of the basic studies in the future of the American school and college.

The problem of defining the basic studies arose out of the frustration inherent in trying to produce a workable definition of the basic content of education. If, at the most primitive level, the basic studies consist of the knowledge acquired through formal or informal education, knowledge which is necessary to function in any society, then it follows that whatever definition we might offer could represent only that which seems to be broadly applicable to American schools today. The basic studies, however, are not only collections of the content of subjects taught or learned; they also include both specific and particular processes necessary to understand and to use such content.

The study of history, for example, requires the acquisition of a temporal perspective; the study of geography, a spatial perspective; and of science, the scientific method. The study of language and literature transcends the memorization of rules of grammar and rhetoric or remembering the authors of a poem or novel. It includes, rather, and should be more clearly identified with, the development of a sensitivity to the nuances and meanings of words and phrases; acquiring the art of clear, direct, and forceful communication; and nurturing an appreciation of how the study of language and literature can provide enjoyment, offer social comment, and contribute to the growth and expansion of the written and spoken word.

We can, therefore, offer no inclusive, "easy" definition of the basic studies which will be entirely satisfactory to every audience. We do hope to provide a working definition which readers reviewing and discussing this document can understand and build upon from their own

experience. The attempts at definition which follow, selected from those written by members of the task force and their consultants, have certain common elements essential to a workable definition. They stress, for example, the dual nature of the basic studies: providing the necessary skills to function in a complex technological society and developing those personal and cultural assets which make participation in society personally rewarding.

Definitions

The basic studies combine the survival skills and cultural assets a student should acquire by the time he or she leaves school, whether as a graduate from senior high school or from some lower school level. Survival skills would include communication--reading, writing, simple arithmetic (not mathematics), some understanding of natural science. Cultural assets would include foreign language study, social and behavioral science, mathematics, history, and the arts. This combination would enable the student to get along in the world and would not only offer him both a chance and choice to make a living, but allow him to enjoy being alive.

Some modified definitions might also be offered: The basic studies are those skills, concepts, and alternative behavior patterns (ways of coping) that are required for individual growth or social assimilation, without primarily leading to vocational or professional success (earning a living). Educational institutions, professional associations, and the lay public have divided these arbitrarily into more or less fixed disciplines, but they are not so categorized by inherent intellectual design.

Basic studies may also be viewed as those knowledges, skills, and processes essential to individual human growth and development and for interpersonal and social encounters.

Basic studies are "basic idea systems" which must be translated and transmitted. In such systems, process becomes as significant as content.

The Variety of Meanings

Among educators and the general public, the term basic studies may have a variety of meanings. This variety of meanings may be conditioned by the purposes of such studies, by the traditions from which they evolved, or by their legislative category. At the most fundamental level, basic studies may be defined by their purpose. As suggested by one or more of the previous attempts at definition, basic studies may be the three R's, or more broadly interpreted as basic learnings required to continue one's formal or informal education; the minimal school skills necessary to survive in and cope with the everyday demands of one's society; or the means by which one gains access to and commerce with other minds, thereby allowing the

individual to advance his own level of knowledge as well as that of knowledge in general. To an editorial writer in the Wall Street Journal on January 2, 1974, basic academic studies are "English, math and science" (p. 6). But so limited a definition, even in the interests of improving school programs, will not serve the many audiences concerned with bettering American education.

To academicians, the basic studies may mean the liberal arts and sciences which evolved from university traditions. In the medieval university the seven liberal arts were grammar, rhetoric, and logic (the Trivium) and geometry, arithmetic, music, and astronomy (the Quadrivium). In contemporary colleges and universities in the United States, the liberal arts generally include the study of literature, languages, philosophy, history, mathematics, and science, or the study of three main branches of knowledge: the humanities (literature and language, philosophy, the fine arts, and history); the physical and biological sciences and mathematics; and the social sciences. Alternately they can be differentiated from professional, vocational, or technical education. Nonetheless, many of the skills acquired from the liberal arts are necessary for entry and performance in professional, vocational, and technical education.

As the liberal arts evolved from their medieval to their contemporary meanings (for example, the growth of psychology from philosophy or of oceanography from geology), some of the daughter sciences became not only new sciences in their own right but also began to focus on problems quite different from the mother science. On the other hand, the growth of new sciences and fields of knowledge can and often does bring fresh insights and approaches to traditional studies. The study of reading in the schools is enriched by the work of psychologists, linguists, learning theorists, and reading specialists. The social sciences today have been strongly influenced and enriched by the behavioral sciences. In many instances, strong humanism now characterizes even the physical and biological sciences. Such multi-, cross-, and interdisciplinary studies as urban studies, environmental studies, ethnic studies, to name only three, evidence the growth, development, and dynamism of the basic studies as well as attest to their relevance to contemporary society and its problems. In Prospects for the 70's: English Departments and Multidisciplinary Study,[1] for example, college and university professors of English demonstrate the expansion of their discipline and the difficulties of establishing "easy" definitions of basic studies.

In administering the Educational Professions Development Act (EPDA), the U.S. Office of Education interpreted the basic studies to include not only those subject areas covered under Title XI of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA)--history, economics, civics, industrial arts, modern foreign languages, reading, and English--but also the natural sciences, humanities, arts, and branches of vocational education

other than the industrial arts.[2] Simultaneously, such school services as educational media, library science, and counseling and guidance became eligible for Federal support as basic studies, as did indeed "any subject generally taught in the schools."[3]

Thus, the variety of meanings and interpretations of the basic studies has proved confusing. Yet, by definition, much educational legislation excludes specific reference to the basic studies and specifies educational renewal or reform in terms of educational processes, career education, urban-rural programs, and programs for a variety of disadvantaged or minority groups. Much extant and impending educational legislation purports to advance education without sufficient regard to the current and potential advances made by the basic studies in new teacher preparation designs, curriculum reform and renewal projects, and discipline-sponsored innovations.

What part, then, do the basic studies, however defined, play in local and national efforts toward educational reassessment and reform? Teachers play one of the most integral roles in education and effective teachers are the essential element in the revitalization of education. The writers of Teachers for the Real World[4] attempt to define the attributes of effective teachers. Among these attributes are the abilities to be human, to negotiate interpersonal contracts with students, to share valuable knowledge and experience, to communicate to broad segments of the society, and to understand the student's world. Underlying all these abilities is a combination of skills built upon a knowledge and understanding of the basic studies.

Yet, current Office of Education programs continue to emphasize new physical arrangements within which education should take place, improved networks of communication for the diffusion of educational innovations, and developing experimental models of in-service or pre-service teacher training programs. However advanced or necessary such programs might be, they still cannot avoid a major argument posed by Teachers for the Real World:

> If the problems of tomorrow are to be understood by learning the lesson of yesterday, the teacher must be well versed in history. If art and music are means by which complicated messages are communicated, the teacher needs to be well versed in these too. . . . Also, the teacher must have that which he is asked to share. To teach reading the teacher must know reading. To teach history, the teacher must be immersed in history. (p. 7)

It is unnecessary to defend the basic studies unless major national educational reform efforts seem to be ignoring them. Considerable Federal money was expended upon the basic studies during the years of Title XI, NDEA, and in the early years of EPDA. And there is considerable evidence that these monies were usefully spent.

As Lewis N. Pino notes in Nothing But Praise,

> We have seen over the last twenty years a progression of national course content improvement efforts, usually well funded and well staffed, moving from physics and mathematics to chemistry, biology, engineering, and earth sciences and then to the behavioral sciences and the humanities. These . . . have in nearly every case gotten the bulk of their support from Federal agencies such as the National Science Foundation, the Office of Education, and the National Endowment for the Humanities.
>
> New and different packages of instructional materials have been produced and tested for almost every discipline; at the elementary and pre-school level several imaginative multi-disciplinary approaches have been proven useful. . . .
>
> This sort of national approach to course content improvement has shown that experienced college and university faculty and experienced elementary and secondary teachers can work together to prepare effective instructional materials.[5]

In One Dollar Gets You Ten: TTT as an Educational Catalyst, J. N. Hook identifies dozens of successful programs based on the involvement of basic studies faculty. At Clark University, for example, he reports that "the presence of the TTT program has made possible . . . special programs and conferences which focus attention on the issues of teaching the social sciences as well as on cross-disciplinary work within the several social sciences."[6]

Despite these imaginative efforts to improve the teaching and learning of the basic studies, however, the commitment of the Office of Education to the basic studies faltered without adequate analysis or, indeed, adequate explanation, as Windows to the Bureaucracy makes clear. That report notes that there was "no policy statement prepared", no "explanation was given as to why the Basic Studies Program was chosen for the cut." It goes on to ask, "If such an analysis was made and such a policy change was intended, why was the information not made public in a fully developed policy statement?"[7]

The mobilization of the discipline-centered professional associations towards national efforts in teacher education had just begun and several exemplary projects were just being initiated when the Office of Education withdrew support from these efforts. One might cite any of the 10 projects developed as a result of the Grove Park Conference as an example of a growing commitment to bring scholars and teachers together to improve the curriculum and teacher education.

The curriculum reform movement has really only begun to gain momentum. Yet, during this crucial period when in-service training becomes ever more important, most Federal assistance for discipline- or basic studies-oriented programs to assist teachers has been eliminated. Despite the limitations of many educational efforts sponsored by subject matter groups, national support is still urgently required to disseminate and evaluate the materials and methodologies developed during a decade of experimentation and involvement. Not to introduce and experiment with the contributions of the basic studies is a waste of resources. Not to stimulate new developments in the teaching and learning of basic skills is unconscionable.

We recognize, of course, that in a changing, pluralistic society, individual bodies of knowledge become more or less valuable at a given time. But some skills and some bodies of knowledge continue to have personal and social use to every citizen. Moreover, the basic studies play important and continuing roles as the strands, the molders, and the transmitters of culture.

III. BASIC STUDIES IN AMERICAN LIFE AND CULTURE

Finally, what is basic is what convention decrees necessary for each individual to participate in American society. Everyone does not participate fully because the degree to which each individual participates seems to depend, at least in part, upon how well each masters his or her lessons. Many are untouched by education. Yet American society continues to strive for each individual to have access to an education which will provide him or her with the basic skills necessary to function within the decrees of convention.

A conventional literacy in the basic studies might be an honest goal of American education and American culture might be characterized by accepting this conventional literacy. Though this literacy has strong traditional roots, it is everchanging. The changes are crucial because they are the products of an American society which can make decisions on whether succeeding generations inherit an evolving society, repeat the mistakes of the past, or receive a dismembered or disintegrated legacy.

Although formal, institutionalized education is a significant transmitter and disseminator of culture, other less formal, even fugitive, kinds of education are equally significant. An individual's education is a happy blending of both the formal and informal elements. The latter, while difficult to identify, are effectively characterized by Michael Novak:

> Philosophers tend to speak of human action as a matter of principles or perhaps as a matter of emotional preferences. But besides the pragmatic effects of actions, there is also their intensity. Besides the principle in view, there is also the style of their execution. Besides the strategy, there are also the preferred, instinctive, comfortable ways of proceeding. Besides the tactics, there is the sense of timing, rhythm, and pace. Besides the circumstances, there are the impulses and passions. Besides the rational, discursive content, there are the gestures, winks, impassivities. Besides the agent, there is the network of others of which he is a part. Besides the calculus of interests, there are also different roles for, and ways of, experiencing pleasures and pains. Besides happiness, or fruitful consequences, there are also the joys of doing things just for the hell of it.[8]

The cultural products of institutionalized education are probably just as elusive, although society has sufficiently sophisticated methodologies to identify the courses of action it may wish to take for itself and for future generations. Nevertheless, and we see this fact more each day, uncertainty characterizes the future of American education.

While we know enough about the decisionmaking process to cope with uncertainty, we find it more difficult to cope with the content of the alternative courses of action for societal decisionmaking about education. As William Bouwsma observes, "Education . . . should convey a society's general beliefs about the meaning and purpose of life, its perceptions about the coherence of experience, its concern with social duty and the relation between the needs of life in society and the development of the individual personality."[9]

There are obviously many ways of approaching these goals. We have intentionally avoided trying to catalogue them because it is more important to emphasize that however American society styles the ways by which education is to occur, the dynamic content of that education, i. e., the basic studies, must be integral to these methods of education. More important, the content and methodologies of these basic studies may even play a major role in shaping the structures and institutions of the education of tomorrow.

The central issue, therefore, is not whether or not society should include the basic studies in educational renewal, reform, and experimentation, but how best the creative institutions of society and education can put these fundamental facts and ideas to their maximum, humane use.

IV. EDUCATIONAL RENEWAL THROUGH CURRICULUM REFORM

It is axiomatic that effective educational renewal cannot come about without curriculum reform. Content and process are not mutually exclusive. While most people would agree with this premise at the verbal level, many in practice treat them as separate and totally distinguishable items. The experience of recent curriculum reform efforts provides a basis for considering the role of the basic studies in the renewal of education.

Directly or indirectly, curriculum reform in science, mathematics, language, and the social studies has had a pervasive impact on education. The list which follows cites some of the areas where this impact has been and should continue to be felt. The list is certainly not intended as a litany of praise. For the most part, we would agree that the impact has been random and uncoordinated. While the effects of various programs have been widespread, actual participation has often been extremely limited. We see, however, a need for better articulation of the reform efforts with our growing understanding of the total educational system.

Curriculum reform in the basic studies has and should contribute to:

--In-service teacher education by providing direction and technical assistance with respect to a particular set of materials or situations. This can be done through the presentation of new knowledge in a subject field and the demonstration of new approaches, processes, and methods;

--Pre-service teacher education by educating the individual as a member of society and providing the specialist training necessary to teach particular subjects or combinations of subjects;

--Collaboration between colleges and schools by coordinating in-service course offerings with school programs and by the exchange of personnel. Subject matter specialists can also assist school personnel in diagnosing and solving school problems while the practical experience of teachers can be utilized in pre-service training. A large number of subject matter specialists were and are directly involved in schools through the various curriculum development projects. They represent a considerable, though underutilized, educational resource.

--Curriculum materials production through a process which includes the mutual assessment of the current situation, the preparation of student and teacher materials that reflect current research and knowledge in the subject and the assessment of the results. While the emphasis has been on content, the proliferation of materials in

particular subjects has helped to highlight the issues relating to process and content. For example, the sanctity of any single approach to mathematics education has been questioned because there are now several distinct approaches to choose from.

--The dissemination of new knowledge and approaches has tended to follow subject matter channels as did the establishment of many of the projects. The professional associations are one of the more effective continuing vehicles for dissemination. In order to promote interdisciplinary communication and collaboration, earlier attempts at operating a consortium of these organizations should be re-examined and efforts made to re-establish this type of cooperation with expanded participation from the field. In addition, the appointment of specialists in dissemination should be encouraged at both the Federal and State levels. At the local level support for the establishment of teacher centers for communication, education and materials development should be given high priority. In effect, many of the curriculum development projects served a "teacher center" function for those systems that participated in the early testing and development of the materials.

--Alternative learning strategies by exploring various approaches through the development of materials which encouraged an open-ended inquiry by students and teachers.

--Inter- and transdisciplinary studies by developing materials that emphasize the solving of problems rather than the acquisition of facts. Teacher education will be the key to the success of this approach. However, the development of appropriate administrative mechanisms, both in the college and the school will be needed to support and legitimize this approach. The seeming threat to the disciplines is illusory, while the vitality this can bring into learning is overdue. It should be noted that this, and many of the other points, require a considerable amount of time for materials development, education and implementation.

--Community involvement and education beyond the school by utilizing the community and its people as an education resource. This two-way exchange brings the community into the school just as much as it brings the school into the community. The community is not a laboratory for students and teachers; it is a reality in any educational system. Sometimes it involves a survey and analysis approach, but just as often it means participating in the solution of community problems. It may

be sampling a local stream, taking a traffic count, or serving as a hospital aide in the Spanish-speaking ward of a nearby hospital. In any case, it is real.

Clearly, each of the items in the above list is a complicated matter upon which books can and have been written. The attempt here is not to survey the "field" or prescribe answers for any one of these areas. The Task Force does want to underline the need to address them as interrelated parts of a system. The popular myth is that the wave of curriculum reform that started in the late 1950's achieved the proportions of an education revolution during the 1960's. In terms of the more obvious product of that reform effort, namely revised curriculum materials, this observation is perhaps true. The fact is that despite the statistics detailing the quantity of materials produced, teachers trained and students taught, the significant impact on education is just beginning to be felt. That impact is less dramatic than the post-Sputnik emergence of the "new math" or "space age science," but it is more pervasive in its effects than most of the developers foresaw. That impact is found in the attitudes and behavior of students, teachers, and the teachers of teachers. The attitudes and actions which were nourished by the well-funded curriculum reform movement provide a foundation for developing a more comprehensive renewal of the education system. The education community is primed as never before to try new combinations and to move in new directions. The missing ingredient is bold, national leadership. We are on the threshold of a bold, new era in the history of American education if we only have the courage and vision to move forward.

It is abundantly clear that the relationship between the basic studies and effective education cannot be dealt with through sporadic collisions of subject matter specialists and educators. It is part of an education continuum whose reform is approached as a result of continuing involvement in and commitment to reform. Each reform effort, whether judged a success or a failure, has some effect on the system we work to change. This necessitates a continuing assessment of what we are trying to do and how we are trying to do it. The aim of this Task Force is to place the basic studies and their continuing renewal in a context which highlights their role in the larger system of education.

The process of curriculum reform has been described as including several stages:

--the examination of developments within a discipline which should be reflected in teaching;

--the "translation" of these topics into educational terms of "what should be taught to which students";

--the preparation of student and teacher materials; and

--the conducting of in-service training for implementation.

There are many variations and embellishments on this theme; these are thought of as the essential elements. That this discreet approach to reform continues to be used while the relevance of formal education is being publicly debated underlines the need to operate with a better appreciation of the total system of education. Unless we seek to understand and react to the system of education, we will continually encounter frustration and disillusionment about the relevance of education. At this point we must give priority to the consolidation and delivery of ideas and services from all parts of the education community. We must stimulate this exchange from outside the schools, from one school to another, and from one classroom to another.

The relevance of the basic studies to an individual's education is a measure of the success or failure of formal education. In a world where change is the password to the future, the basic or essential studies must be based on dynamic, evolving concepts rather than on static reflections of the past. Curriculum revision needs to be more than a matter of periodic repairs to out-dated textbooks. Course content must keep pace with the recent developments in the appropriate fields of knowledge, but we should never lose sight of the students' individual and societal needs. What is taught is important, but how it is taught may be more important.

Making sure the subject matter is accurate so that the right message is being sent is only part of the task. Communication implies receiving as well as sending a message. It is important that we develop and maintain materials that are more responsive to student concerns. Curriculum material needs to be available in forms that people can use in a variety of ways, ignoring some parts, forming new combinations, or adding parts of their own design. This means that the amount of appropriate material available should be far more than is likely to be used by anyone. This flow of materials then increases the possible permutations and decreases the pressures of conformity.

The continuing revision of ideas, materials, and approaches will happen most satisfactorily when it is a joint venture involving students, teachers, administrators, and subject matter specialists. Involvement means more than one part of the system (i. e., teachers) providing feedback to another part (i. e., university scholars). It means that viable and respected contributions flow from all parts of the education system. It implies a network in which ideas start from everywhere and go anywhere to benefit the system. True involvement would de-emphasize an information hierarchy and strengthen professional parity.

Beyond revision there is dissemination, and with this in mind it is necessary that there be an intellectual confrontation with the media industries and especially book publishers. With the student as the reference point, we need to involve all the elements of the educational delivery system in the continuing assessment and renewal of education.

The need for continuing examination of the basic studies and their role in the school is highlighted by the extent to which social issues have invaded the school program. No matter how one defines the basic studies, he or she must confront the needs of the individual and society to deal with issues such as environment, population, drugs, war, and peace. Often these concerns give rise to specially labeled education programs such as environmental education and ethnic studies. Frequently they provide new opportunities to advance ideas that have been on the education agenda for a long time. There is, however, a problem inherent in the usual response to these broad social issues. It is assumed too often that a cure for social problems is to teach about them in the schools. The equation is too simplistic in that it assumes that broad public awareness of a problem will produce the desired changes in behavior and thus a solution to the problem.

These hyphenated-education programs are, therefore, often strong on approach or process and weak on substance. Too often they have a negative cant because they oppose existing social practices. Inevitably, they cross discipline lines and challenge existing ideas of how knowledge is organized and utilized. Nevertheless, they offer new, although undervalued, opportunities to advance ideas that have been on the education agenda for a long time, and they deal with issues that students are concerned about.

Education and society are in a state of transition which at present is generating more questions than answers. The various disciplines offer tools for examining the problems that accompany this transition, but the resolution, or at least the next step, is to be found in a total system approach. The emphasis must be on how things relate to each other. The increasing attention given to the interrelationships among different parts of a system and the problems facing society at large have given rise to an academic collage of inter-, multi-, trans-, and adisciplinary speculations and programs. In the midst of this search for new disciplinary relationships there is an opportunity to re-examine priorities and reshape the education process to meet contemporary needs. Again, this is not so much a new idea as a new opportunity. Alfred North Whitehead some 50 years ago urged that we must "eradicate the fatal disconnection of subjects which kills the vitality of our modern curriculum."

How can we consolidate our advances, resolve our non-successes, learn from our mistakes, and move on from here? For one thing, increased emphasis must be placed on local needs and available resources of the local educational scene. Second, support of curriculum improvement, with special emphasis on inter- and transdisciplinary studies, utilizing scholars and teachers must be continued. Third, resources and mechanisms for continuing the education of teachers at all levels of the

educational spectrum must be identified, developed, and provided. Above all, the child and his future, rather than past or present priorities, must be at the center of these efforts.

Implementation of these ideas will be tremendously enhanced through the availability of national leadership and effective communication mechanisms. This Task Force therefore recommends the development of a national system of Regional Basic Studies Councils which will constitute the design and evaluation elements for specified Office of Education programs. This system would draw on the vast national pool of experts from various fields who are concerned with the quality of education in the United States and dedicated to doing something about it. This system would provide the mechanism which would make specific program efforts more than just one more disembodied attempt at educational reform.

Some of the salient points relating to the establishment of such a system of regional councils are:

--delegated concern with the overall operations and achievements of specified programs;

--participants in the pool should be used individually or in groups depending on defined needs;

--accessibility to any part of the system for the various LEA's, SEA's, or the Office of Education for consultation and collaboration;

--no line authority with respect to programs;

--a separate budget so that use of the councils does not constitute a drain on program people or dollar resources;

--responsibility for maintaining a chronicle of the program for evaluation purposes;

--responsibility, to the extent possible, for developing communication from one part of the program to another about relevant experiences, the successes and failures, of the different sites;

--the dissemination of ideas from other programs, both here and abroad;

--the responsibility for articulating a number of models which could contribute to the continuing reform of education to meet the evolving needs of society.

In effect, this approach would constitute an advisory system keyed to regional needs, but responsive to activities at the national level.

There are significant realignments underway among the various forces which shape education. We are at a point where we need an abundance of faith, courage, informed imagination, and a propensity to act in order to effectively continue what is already underway.

V. IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

Among educators, the word "change" is too often equated with improvement and success. Unhappily, the change may frequently prove to be the mere replacement of one unsatisfactory system with another. It is a commonplace in education that zealous educators often accept too readily the latest crop of missionaries, the newest and most "relevant" materials. But as the door to the individual classroom closes and students and teacher come together to learn, the true program emerges. The individual teacher working with students is the ultimate test of the effectiveness of any change--in materials, techniques, school organization, or governance. What should work sometimes doesn't, perhaps because the teacher has been forced to accept a new approach, perhaps because the teacher has had too little share in designing or modifying new materials.

Necessary cautions suggest that those advocating change ascertain, first, whether or not the change is likely to be a real improvement. Second, procedures must be established to guarantee that those affected by any change will have an opportunity to express their concerns and to assist in the design of any new enterprise.

While it is conceivable that change, growth, improvement, and modification can arise spontaneously in a classroom or school, it is more likely that modifications result from dissatisfaction with the existing curriculum, district objectives, or local resources, and with increasing sophistication among teachers and others responsible for designing programs. An important first step toward change is to establish a set of needs as viable objectives and to evaluate present conditions.

If, for example, a system discovers that many students are not being properly served because of their inability to comprehend English, the district would do well to review the situation in depth. It must use the expertise of teachers, administrators, representatives of the community, and outside consultants to ask and answer a series of key questions. What proportion of the schools' population are non-native speakers? What is the prospective rate of growth per school grade of this population? Which languages are involved? What effects have been observed on existing curricula, faculty hiring, and allocation of resources? To what extent have parents been polled for their reactions to existing programs and their assessment of new needs? Have new leaders emerged and been identified so that they may contribute to the schools' efforts to build new programs? What agencies have been actively integrated into school and community affairs? What governmental actions have been sought or implemented? The list is lengthy, but the pursuit of special, specific information and suggestions for change essential. Without a well-rounded picture of the total situation and its ramifications, no valid solution can be devised, introduced, and evaluated. But once the problem is known, possible solutions can be identified, studied and introduced.

With pertinent information in hand--some of it gathered and evaluated by subject matter specialists, some by community representatives--a responsible committee of representative community leaders, administrators, teachers, guidance personnel, agency workers, local college and university faculty members and administrators, and selected students can be convened to clarify issues, establish priorities, and explore solutions. If, for example, it is learned that whole classes in some schools are non-English speaking, the solutions may be different from those considered if the non-English population is scattered throughout the district. It is important to know, for example, whether special classes are available in all schools. It is important to know whether or not non-native speakers have mastered sufficient English upon graduation to continue their education or to find suitable local employment. It is important to know whether or not the district has a cadre of dedicated, qualified teachers to undertake new bilingual programs.

A series of meetings might then be held at a time convenient to all concerned persons. Teachers in the schools should be allowed and, indeed, encouraged to contribute to these meetings. If necessary, the district should provide substitutes for them in their classes in order to permit them to participate. In the event that meaningful curricular or staffing changes may result from the discussions, it would be wise to have the teacher representatives selected by their peers in free elections with the proviso that they will be in constant communication with the local teachers' associations and organizations. These important meetings would examine the many phases of the problem, propose solutions, initiate changes, and recommend modifications after evaluations have been obtained. A wide use of subcommittees can be made when desirable and necessary. Subcommittees, with funds provided to assist them, might visit other districts, meet with community members, help keep the community apprised of progress through special newsletters to all residents and articles in the foreign language press, interact with college and university specialists to establish special workshops or courses.

Simple solutions rarely emerge in any situation, but satisfactory compromises can usually be agreed upon if full and accurate information is available and if there has been adequate consultation. In this hypothetical case, several schools might elect to offer a true bilingual experience in which <u>all</u> students learn in two languages simultaneously and achieve compound bilingualism by the sixth grade. Such an effort would enhance the self-esteem of the non-native speaker. The high school might open its doors and accept a wide range of community involvements as curricular substitutes. Foreign language students might act as aides to recent immigrants or as tutors in the lower schools. Non-native speakers might be offered content subjects in their first language so that they could master the content at the same time that they are offered special work to give them a command of English.

Such programs necessitate massive use of aides and paraprofessionals. They call for training complexes, summer and weekend workshops presented by a col-

lege or university in conjunction with teachers in the schools. They demand continuous assessment of results through follow-up studies, assessments of community and student attitudes, and the use of nationally and locally normed standardized tests.

In brief, the school district identifies its needs and draws upon the resources of specialists in the basic studies as well as other appropriate groups to help solve curricular and community problems. Institutions of higher education work hand-in-hand with the district, responding promptly and fully to requests for special expertise and special programs. The content and conduct of a program become a joint effort of several parties, each contributing to more effective, more responsive schooling.

VI. CURRICULUM EXAMPLES

Two examples of projects which successfully utilized the basic studies follow. They are intended as illustrative material to suggest the commitment of the basic studies to the reform of public schooling. They indicate, as dozens of other examples might have, that research knowledge can be effectively translated into school materials which stimulate effective learning.

Intermediate Science Curriculum Study

An example of a typical major curriculum development in the area of science is the Intermediate Science Curriculum Study, based at Florida State University and jointly funded by the U.S. Office of Education and the National Science Foundation. The long-range goal of the project is to develop and implement for grades 7 through 9 a coordinated science sequence that is scientifically accurate, consistent with good learning theory, and well adapted to the age level for which it is intended. Experimental laboratory kits, student guide books, self-tests, teacher manuals, behavioral objectives, and evaluation materials have been developed for each grade. Individualization is achieved through a series of "excursions" which the student may elect. Some excursions are remedial in nature, as, for instance, an excursion to provide the necessary mathematical background to handle a concept. Other excursions allow the student to go into a topic in greater depth. In addition to materials for the student and the teacher, the project has produced teacher preparation modules useful in both in-service and pre-service training of teachers.

The content for the seventh grade course is organized around the twin themes of energy, its forms and characteristics, and measurement and operational definition. As the student learns to think in operational terms and becomes aware of what it really means to measure something, he discovers a series of relationships that lead him to the concept of energy and reveal the tremendous power of this important idea. The organizing themes for grade 8 are matter and its composition and model building. In this course, the student finds that, although the basic structure of matter cannot be observed directly, a very useful picture--a model--can be deduced by making a few logical assumptions. He then discovers the model he has developed to be a very useful tool for interpreting physical, chemical, and biological situations, both in the laboratory and in nature.

The ninth-grade course is designed to synthesize and extend the investigative experience and knowledge gained up to that point and to apply them to problems of practical and scientific significance. It is composed of a series of discrete "investigations" or units, each designed to occupy the student for 6 to 8 weeks. The primary foci of these units are genetics, Why You're You; geology, Crusty Problems; astronomy, In Orbit;

meteorology, Winds and Weather; human biology and psychology, Human Variation; space science, What's Up?; health science, Well Being; and environmental biology and ecology, Environmental Science. The volume of materials for grade 9 is over twice that of either the seventh or eighth grade materials; schools therefore have content options in the earth, space, and life sciences.

There are unit tests as well as final examination tests for each grade level. The unit tests are of a criterion reference type and are designed to be taken by the individual student at the time he completes a unit of instruction. Each test focuses entirely upon the student's personal progress in the particular materials he has completed. These tests are not designed to serve a normative function of distributing students within some "normal" grading distribution but rather, by virtue of the individualized self-pacing structure of ISCS, the prime focus of test usage is on assessing individual performance as one of several means of identifying remedial courses of action when necessary. In addition, the student's performance on these tests in relation to his ability provides objective information that can be used by the teacher to generate grades where the school's reporting system calls for such.

An Example of an Effective Reading Program

The American Institute for Research identified for the National Center for Educational Communication 10 promising reading programs in the Nation's schools. Only 1 of the 10 programs is identified in this description, which is derived from materials produced by the Office of Education's Right To Read office, which recognizes a number of school programs as Right To Read demonstration programs.

Higher Horizons 100 Program

This program was a special 1-year program in the Hartford, Connecticut, High School ninth grade. The population is 43 percent black, 16.2 percent Puerto Rican, and 40.8 percent "other." Seventy percent of the students come from Aid-for-Dependent-Children homes. One hundred students are in the program at present.

School-Within-A-School. The identification of Project Higher Horizons 100 students as a special group enables the program staff to build pride and self-confidence in the students. This is essential to motivate them to break out of their defeatist attitude about school and to strive for academic accomplishment. The school within a school also provides the flexibility necessary for effective program operation. Schedules may be changed, special events arranged, and emphasis placed on solving a special problem without disturbing the larger school operation.

Challenge to Students. Students are motivated to succeed through a sense of "esprit de corps" developed by constant emphasis of each individual student's

worth. Recruitment and selection procedures are designed to reinforce the concept that Higher Horizon 100 students comprise an exclusive group with high potential. Repeated emphasis is placed upon high standards and hard work; there is no room for laxity or quiet failure. The program regularly turns out highly motivated students with a strong commitment to personal success.

Intensive Pre-Planning/Training. An intensive 4-week planning and training session is conducted during the month of July prior to the start of school. Indoctrination for newly assigned staff, complete review of selected students' cumulative folders, parental visits to the school, and staff visits to the homes ensure that the program will be effective when school convenes.

Facilities and Preparation. Six standard classrooms, a teacher's lounge, and a small office are assigned to the program. The lounge is used for staff meetings, student counseling, and as the Team Leader's office. The smaller office is used by the Project Assistant to perform secretarial duties and for project files and equipment.

At least once each week a staff meeting is held to review the status of each student. These meetings enable the staff to be aware of the social and academic progress of all students. Parents are occasionally invited to these meetings, as necessary. Training for staff is conducted by specialists in materials, audiovisual, and subject matter areas. Emphasis is placed on methods for improving reading as it relates to the other academic areas.

Five 45-minute periods per day are rotated to ensure a morning treatment of each subject except gym at least once each week. Subjects include speech and reading, English, mathematics, regional studies, science, gym, and supervised study.

Grouping is homogeneous in English and mathematics, heterogeneous in other subject classrooms. Within the language arts classes a great deal of individualized and small group work is conducted to improve speech and reading skills.

Instructional Methods. The major thrust of the program is the enhancement of the individual student's self-confidence. This is achieved by a close-knit team effort on the part of the instructional staff. Each student is challenged, rather than coddled. Previous members of the Higher Horizons 100 program who have gone on to become outstanding students are extolled as models of what is possible. Constant individual attention to reading problems rapidly restores self-confidence and the will to succeed. All teachers stress reading. Mathematics, science, and social studies teachers integrate instruction in reading, writing, and vocabulary skills into their daily lessons. Those students who encounter personal or academic difficulties are provided with a college-age tutor to provide support and assistance.

Materials utilized are largely commercially prepared off-the-shelf, prescribed for individual problems or used in normal classroom activities.

Diagnostic-Prescriptive Procedures. The Metropolitan Achievement Test is utilized as the general diagnostic instrument. The first diagnosis enables the staff to determine the mathematical and language arts abilities for assignment to classes. Within the language arts class, a more individualized approach is utilized. The Iowa Silent Reading Examination and the SRA Writing Skills Test are both administered. For reading diagnosis an item analysis is performed on the results of the Iowa Test in order to obtain a profile for each individual student. Based on this profile, specific reading materials are assigned. Gray Oral and Cooper tests are also utilized for the same purpose. These last two tests provide a more detailed diagnosis for prescription.

Classroom Organization. Project students receive all their instruction under the supervision of the Project team leader, except for physical education. The Higher Horizons 100 students study together in study halls supervised by paraprofessionals from the regular school staff. The academic schedule consists of the basic studies, mathematics, language arts (reading and speech), social studies, science, and English. This schedule is completely independent of the regular schedule and may be modified by the team leader as necessary. About 33 per cent of the total classroom work is individualized while the remainder of the time is divided between small group activity and the more traditional classroom instruction

The reading program is highly individualized. The reading teacher completes a diagnosis of each student and assigns specific materials to help overcome his reading deficiencies. Instruction is based on commercially available off-the-shelf materials, modified in some cases to meet the needs of an individual student.

Parental Support. Parents are contacted during the summer pre-service training period and encouraged to come to the project to get acquainted with the Program staff. After they have visited the Program they are made aware that they may visit the team leader or teachers at any time regarding their students.

Cultural Activities. Field trips are preplanned to accomplish objectives in the areas of historical, civic, and cultural interest. Audio recordings on ethnic history and supplementary current reading materials are available. Guest speakers have included government officials and others who spoke on topics of special interest.

Evaluation. An independent evaluation was performed by an evaluator assigned to the evaluation office of the Hartford Public Schools. The results of the Iowa Silent Reading Test for Hartford Public High School, Higher Horizons Project, are indicated below:

Comparison of Iowa Silent Reading Test Scores
Fall 1970 - Spring 1971

Fall 1970			Spring 1971		Average Gain	Significance
N	Mean G.E.	S.D.	Mean G.E.	S. D.		
89	6.1	1.2	8.2	1.6	+2.1	.01

The results of the Metropolitan Test are indicated below:

Comparison of Mean Metropolitan Achievement
Test Scores Spring 1970 - Spring 1971

	Spring 1970			Spring 1971			Average Gain	Significance
Subtest	N	Mean G.E.	S.D.	N	Mean G.E.	S.D.		
Word Knowledge	67	6.7	1.6	67	8.1	1.5	+1.2	.01
Reading	67	6.7	1.6	67	7.2	1.8	+ .5	.01

N includes all program students completing both pre- and post-tests. As indicated in the tables above, all scores were significant at the .01 level of confidence.

One of the reasons why the Right To Read Program has called attention to this experimental program is so that the model can be adapted. It is suggested that an adequate amount of space must be assigned to support the school-within-a-school concept. This includes separate facility for the staff as well as for the students. All of the equipment listed for the original program is not necessary for program replication. However, sufficient equipment for the individualization of instruction must be provided through program or regular school resources.

The regular student annual cost is $800, and the additional cost of this experimental program is $100. It is apparent that the program could be adapted in one way or another in many schools throughout the country.

Additional information regarding the latest published evaluation of Higher Horizons 100 may be obtained from the Hartford Public Schools, 249 High Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06103.

VII. THE BASIC STUDIES AND REFORM IN TEACHER EDUCATION

To achieve improvement and reform in American education, new programs are needed which focus on those elements of the educational process amenable to change and on those with capacity for having the greatest influence and impact. The Basic Studies Task Force is convinced that the most critical of these elements--the one most likely to cause the greatest movement toward improvement and reform--is the teacher. It is on the preparation and continuing education of the teacher at all levels (preschool through graduate school) where emphasis must be placed.

Higher education's involvement in teacher preparation is taking new forms. One sees an emphasis developing in the in-service education of teachers with cooperative programs being organized--mostly field-centered--which call upon the leadership and talent already available in the schools to take an active partnership role with the colleges and universities. The other major direction receiving considerable attention is the move to performance-based preparation programs, especially in States where certification standards are under review.

Along with these changes in teacher education is the new and increasing concern within the disciplines where responsibility for general studies or liberal education rests. This trend is essential to the basic health of teacher education and demands encouragement and forceful leadership.

The Need for Reform

Given the frequency and intensity of the criticisms leveled against higher education in recent years, it is difficult to believe that academicians would be unwilling to engage in the reform of teacher education and, indeed, of all general education. Discussing the "inadequacies and irrelevance of much that presently constitutes the general studies or liberal education component" in the education of teachers, George Denemark observes, "In terms of both content and process, general studies often fail to provide students with opportunities to experience what is involved in decision making and choice, the establishment of meaning, the use of evidence and logic, and collaboration toward proximate goals. Instead, they afford narrow, formalized introductions to a string of disconnected subjects superficially considered through emphasis upon nomenclature, classification systems, or the manipulation of paraphernalia." In the Eleventh Charles W. Hunt Lecture, Fred T. Wilhelms assails the liberal arts faculty because "their curricula are not only largely irrelevant, but almost deliberately so. . . . They almost deliberately turn their backs on relevant life purposes, preferring the technical rigors of the 'pure' and remote discipline."

Charles Silberman demonstrates the intensity of the attack on higher education in his condemnation of "the narcissism of so many college professors and administrators who, at least until prodded by student

rebels, refused to think about the nature and content of liberal education, particularly about the ways in which knowledge may have to be re-ordered to make it teachable to a new generation." Students, taxpayers, and legislators have joined educators and academicians in insisting that colleges and universities take a fresh look at the programs which educate teachers for the schools and seek also to develop men and women "who are at once inward bound--directed, that is, toward self-understanding and self-fulfillment of their whole personalities as human beings--and outward bound--directed toward forms of activity and work that will serve to make the whole world a more tolerable place for human beings to live in."

Academic departments have become noticeably more willing than ever before to discuss matters once relegated to departments and colleges of education. They are already involved on many campuses in stating objectives, determining competencies, assessing program effectiveness as well as student performance, and justifying instructional and research costs.

English and the Reform Movement

English may provide a good example of a discipline closely related to teacher education which is undergoing a far-reaching self-examination. In an important address to his fellow English Department chairmen, John Gerber of the University of Iowa summed up the current state of the discipline: "At the risk of sounding a bit like a behaviorist I would suggest that our most pressing obligation at the moment is to redefine our goals in reasonably precise terms; and that these goals be realizable ones that can be used as criteria for measuring the success or failure of our programs; and that they clearly relate to the needs of students and of society, as well as reflecting our own deepest convictions."

As the pressure for "responsible accountability" has grown in recent years, The Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English, which includes representatives from large and small, public and private schools and colleges, has wrestled with the possibilities and limitations of a system approach to the teaching and learning of English which could use quantifiable, measurable behavioral objectives. In its first publication on the subject, the commission recognized that "some major benefits might someday arise from the writing of behavioral objectives for English," but cautioned that the task was not "to be undertaken lightly nor by lightweights" for the "process bristles with problems in semantics, philosophy, measurement, and pedagogy."

Through the work of the Tri-University Project on Behavioral Objectives in English, the profession now has a modest "framework for a conceptualization of our task that will lead to freer, more open classrooms with increased student involvement in things relevant to their lives, and increased skill in using their native language in all of its manifestations." The project's

Catalog of Behavioral Objectives for English in Grades 9 to 12 cautiously explains that "many behaviors that students are expected to demonstrate in English are relatively uncomplicated: to spell certain words in accordance with modern practice, to punctuate in harmony with clearly stated principles, to adhere to conventional patterns of word order, to read passages of appropriate difficulty and to be able to answer factual questions on those passages, etc. The objectives for such tasks can be readily stated in behavioral fashion as for comparable tasks of mathematics or the science laboratory."

The catalog is a valuable tool for examining what activities are amenable to such behavioral description and suggests those activities which do and should go on in the English classroom and in the preparation programs of teachers of English. Yet, few, if any, professionals in the field would claim that these easily identified objectives are the important concerns in the teaching and learning of English. Of an entirely different order of magnitude are the questions about an education in English posed by Caroline Shrodes of the University of California at San Francisco: "Has our teaching been designed to liberate our students from parochialism, to extend their consciousness and accordingly the possibilities for choice? Have we helped them to make reason and intellect the conscious allies for their emotions?"

The College of Education and the Department of English at the University of Illinois at Urbana are currently trying to fuse the best current thinking in English with the best of PBTE (Performance-Based Teacher Education) in a competencies-based program for teacher education in English. Bryant Fillion states major goals for the program: "By evaluating, justifying, and clarifying the competencies with the candidates, by shifting much of the responsibility for learning to the candidate, by remaining flexible and responsive to individual candidate's needs and aspirations, by providing for individual assessment and feedback, by changing the role of the professor, and by relying heavily on the theory and practice of humanistic education, this program is intended to serve not merely as a more efficient means of evaluation, but as a model to the candidate as well. The program's use of extended seminars; informal contact among professors, undergraduate candidates, and teachers; experience in varied and actual teaching situations; and a training-group atmosphere is an assertion that humanistic teaching, reflecting the theories of such psychologists as Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, and Arthur Combs, is both possible and worthwhile."

Restructuring the Basic Studies Curriculum

The situation in other disciplines is not dissimilar. Most subject matter fields are marked today by a general call for greater accountability and better standards of educational aims and objectives, a growing body of

theoretical discussion which has significant pedagogical implications for the teaching and learning of the subject, wide and varied experimentation with educational innovations, a nervousness about the rigidities of systems approaches to education and narrowly conceived measures of assessment, and a willingness to participate in the design and conduct of more responsible teacher education programs as part of a general movement toward the restructuring of the curriculum.

If it were to offer no more, this movement toward PBTE would provide the subject matter specialist with the opportunity to consider more carefully such statements as the assertion by Stanley Moses that the "traditional approach to education is no longer adequate to deal with the needs of a society where knowledge and skills change so rapidly as to make continuing education neither a luxury nor an indulgence--but a necessity. In addition, changes in occupational structure, the amount of leisure and, most important, the level of education of the general populace, all serve to augur a rising demand for education at different periods of life, both for work and more general cultural and leisure purposes."

If they are convinced by Moses and other students of higher education, academicians must consider how present subject matter preparation of prospective school and college teachers will have to change. They will have to define, quite specifically, how new programs will differ from existing ones. They will be forced, in effect, to state objectives for work in their fields which will enable future educators to function--let us say perform--effectively.

Evaluation/Assessment

Once past the initial stages of redefinition of goals and objectives, the issue of evaluation emerges as the single most critical issue when one considers Improvement and Reform in American Education. For, no matter which theoretical model is chosen; no matter what specific directions are determined; no matter what goals and objectives are set; little, if any, discernible movement toward successful achievement of the improvement and reform aims will occur unless appropriate and varied assessment procedures and instruments are identified, developed, and consistently used.

Typically, new educational programs in the past have come and gone--are initiated and dropped--with little evidence that such decisions were made on the basis of careful assessment and evaluation. It is the strong hope of the Basic Studies Task Force that this trend will be reversed and that future program decisions are soundly based on research and evaluation.

Criticisms of and demands on education are increasing daily. The pressures are being felt at all levels: the U.S. Office of Education, State departments of education, professional associations, public schools, and in teacher education institutions as well as in the liberal arts colleges and universities.

Most of these pressures center on the subject of evaluation, and are generally given the title of "accountability." The direction of movement appears quite clearly to be one toward performance-based or competency-based assessment. Although most professionals are able to accept the concept of performance-based programs on the theory level, few are prepared to launch into full-scale programs of performance evaluation. This reluctance comes primarily from the fact that we lack the knowledge, experience, and the very instruments of measurements themselves.

Stanley Elam, writing for AACTE in Performance-Based Teacher Education: What Is The State of the Art?, has identified this basic problem:

> . . . the overriding problems before which the others pale to insignificance is that of the adequacy of measurement instruments and procedures. Performance-based programs can only be successful if there are adequate means to assess. . . . The bulk of the effort in establishing performance-based programs is most likely to go into development of new instructional materials, into new working arrangements among different agencies, into moving programs into the field, and--most important of all--into developing ways to use faculty most effectively in the operation of unconventional modules in a conventional system. But, when all of this is done, an institution will still not have moved beyond current conventional grading practices unless new methods are found for assessing the complex cognitive and affective objectives which are such an essential part of the training of teachers.

Three areas come to the fore as those upon which evaluation procedures and instruments must focus: the curriculum, the teacher, and the student.

The Curriculum

Walter Loban, distinguished professor and researcher at the University of California at Berkeley, has said: "The size of the curriculum inevitably shrinks to the size of the test." The Task Force accepts this premise and implores those involved with educational improvement and reform to encourage the development of multiple and varied assessment instruments for use in evaluating new curricular programs. Such variety would, of course, include both short- and long-range measurements, allowing for changes and alterations of programs on the basis of ongoing research and testing. Change and/or termination decisions would necessarily be based on evidence revealed in a thorough evaluation strategy rather than on arbitrary and capricious decisions based on whatever else. The program's stated objectives would serve as the criteria for assessment and evaluation. Further, any evaluation of the curriculum must focus on the process as well as on the content.

The Teacher

Basic questions arise as teacher evaluation is considered: (1) Who should assess teacher performance? (2) On what criteria should teacher performance be based? (3) To what extent should evaluation be placed on performance of the teacher and to what extent on performance of the learner? (4) Can performance in the affective domain be assessed as effectively as performance in the cognitive and psychomotor domains? (5) To what extent should teacher evaluation depend on student performance? Finally, most important and, in fact, overriding these problems is the question of the adequacy of measurement instruments and procedures. Any program in educational improvement and reform must focus on solving these questions and problems.

The Student

Cognitive, affective, and psychomotor growth is the goal toward which the educational effort is directed. This is the student outcome that should serve as the criteria by which renewal and reform is ultimately evaluated. Care must be exercised to ensure adequate measurement and evaluation of divergence, creativity, and unexpected outcomes, as well as the more easily described and assessed competencies. A second imperative demands assessment devices which go beyond traditional paper/pencil instruments.

Systems Approaches and Accountability

Proponents of a systems approach to education have most often failed to understand the essential difference between efficiency and cost effectiveness on the factory assembly line and the intelligent, humane use of educational resources to foster individual student learning. Though most often not intentionally capitalizing on public disenchantment with educational achievement and with the rising costs of schooling, systems engineers in education have succeeded in putting their opponents in a vulnerable position. It is not easy, after all, to argue with a rational plea for "an insistence upon a clear definition of the purpose of the system, and upon the formulation of performance expectations stated specifically enough to enable the construction of criterion measures that will reveal evidence of the degree to which expected performance has been attained."

Aware that opposition to accountability schemes in education can be construed as anti-intellectual, George Henry argues, ". . . the issue appears to be 'to plan or not to plan,' when actually it is a refusal to accept a restrictive, inadequate planning methodology in place of creative flexible approaches." After reviewing a number of recently established and highly publicized projects using systems technology, James Hoetker asserts, "There is, to put it bluntly, no more empirical, objective evidence that the application of systems technology to instruction will contribute significantly more to improving the effectiveness or efficiency of an educational program than would the installation of an official school astrologer." The emphasis

in performance-based programs on the specification of observable, assessable performance standards leads Harry Broudy to term "naive" the attempt "to reduce this welter of talk to overt performance that a teacher should be able to execute on demand."

On the other hand, any performance-based program offers explicit statements of its educational objectives and takes into account the specific needs and interests of students as they have expressed them. It uses the school--indeed the community and the society--as an essential resource in the educational program. It helps students to know exactly what is expected of them in any unit of work, permits students to proceed at their own pace, and provides means for students to repeat work until principles or techniques have been mastered. It promotes experimentation with traditional credit hour and course and classroom arrangements. It establishes a continuing process of evaluation and assessment in order to maintain a program in which students learn readily and successfully. By stressing exit rather than entrance requirements, by emphasizing the importance of field work as well as classroom work, and by establishing alternatives to traditional grading systems, it encourages individuals of every age and from many backgrounds to enter higher education, to continue their professional growth, and to identify and prepare for new careers.

Performance-based programs can promote the most rigorous questioning of goals. James Hoetker, for example, introduces to his colleges in the liberal arts and sciences the kinds of legitimate questions which performance-based programs pose: "What are the preferences, responses, pastimes, expenditures, companionships, activities that distinguish" the liberally educated man or woman "from those who have not had this advantage?" He inquires further, "Which of the behaviors of the liberally educated man do we actively discourage our students from exhibiting? Which of the behaviors of the uneducated man do we reward our students for exhibiting?"

To help answer such questions, departments engaged in teacher education and in a review of their own programs are asked by Hoetker to identify and spell out the "broad behavioral goals for a year's work" in their fields. "The sensitivity to behavioral signs and processes that will develop when one is working in full consciousness of such objectives," he adds, "will lead to the emergence or the discovery of the more specific objectives."

Once the faculty member begins to define successfully "the things a liberally educated man does that are not done by the uneducated," he or she can then consider whether the work which students undertake in his or her field contributes to a truly liberal education, one which, in William Arrowsmith's words, "liberates because it sets us free to become ourselves, to realize ourselves; it frees us to learn, slowly and painfully perhaps, our limitations and our powers, and to recognize our real modalities, undeafened by the overwhelming Muzak of the social and political enterprise."

These strengths of the PBTE conceptual model obviously extend far beyond the teacher education program. They are, however, most important for the design and implementation of more effective pre- and in-service teacher education programs in which subject matter specialists work more closely than ever before with their colleagues in education, with students, with practicing teachers, and with the community. PBTE can become a major reform movement affecting the subject matter preparation of prospective teachers if academicians take more seriously the participation of students in the design of their own programs, the contributions which academic expertise can make in helping to solve the problems of the schools, the opportunity to design modules which present prospective teachers with skills and knowledge which can be applied in the classroom, the chance to experiment with ways of evaluating students more effectively, and the possibilities of multi-disciplinary research and teaching.

The Problem of Assessment

The problem of assessment remains the most serious, unresolved issue in PBTE. The questions have been raised before, but they must be raised again and again. The AACTE Committee on PBTE has warned, "We cannot be sure that measurement techniques essential both to objectivity and to valid assessment of affective and complex cognitive objectives will be developed rapidly enough for the new exit requirements to be any better than the conventional letter grades of the past."

It is true, of course, as Bryant Fillion has argued, that competencies "imply performance criteria, but they are not necessarily stated behaviorally." That is, certain competencies may be stated in terms of outcomes the teacher produces in others rather than in specific moves which the teacher himself makes. Some may only be stated as required experiences, such as passing a particular course or visiting a school, because the outcomes of such experiences, while not measurable, prove essential to the development of competence as the program defines it.

The danger still exists that PBTE programs will settle for competencies stated in narrow behavioral terms and will spend their energies assessing what is least important for the creative, continuing growth of the student or the teacher. Stephen Judy has also argued that it "seems likely that the teacher performance objectives will also be conservative, since the States will in effect be trying to locate teachers who can raise basic skills examination scores. If the movement proceeds unchecked, English departments may find themselves under pressure to train teachers whose principal skills are leading language drill and planning seatwork."

Recognizing the importance of this issue of assessment, the National Commission on Undergraduate Education and the Education of Teachers has recommended that the "idea of 'performance' and 'behavioral objectives' should possibly be redefined in broader, less narrowly behavioristic terms, and in non-qualified, verbal terms."

Assessment of performance remains the nagging, unsettling problems for PBTE. Subject matter departments can contribute their expertise to helping to devise appropriate measures of assessment. A reliance on narrowly stated behavioristic competencies, however, will almost guarantee that the subject matter departments will not participate in the PBTE movement. While some activities can, of course, be readily stated in behaviorial terms, the most important attitudes and values developed through a liberal education resist such codification and evaluation.

Summary

If the issue of assessment can be handled responsibly, PBTE could become an educational movement of enormous force. In teacher education, indeed in all of undergraduate education, academic departments could begin to involve students more fully and responsibly in their learning, to make clear and public statements of the goals of their courses and programs, to experiment with the evaluation and assessment of students and programs, to introduce alternatives to traditional courses and course arrangements, and to involve students and faculty more fully in the life of the school, community, and society.

Again, Stanley Elam's AACTE paper Performance-Based Teacher Education: What Is the State of the Art? serves to highlight this basic issue:

> . . . one of the elements that seems likely to receive only the attention that is left after other needs are taken care of is the very one that is unique and critical to success--adequate evaluation. Unless there is a change of focus on the part of developers--perhaps a concentration of effort involving division of labor among institutions in some kind of exchange network--and unless the federal government, seeing this as necessary, provides massive new resources and support for the creation of adequate evaluation schemes, performance-based programs may well fail to achieve more than a fraction of their potential.

The Basic Studies Task Force wholeheartedly concurs with this summary statement of Mr. Elam; top priority must be assigned to the issue of research and development in evaluation, or the program of improvement and reform in American education will fail.

VIII. THE NEED FOR CONTINUING REVIEW

In trying to define basic studies and their role in improving American schools, the Task Force had to ask, for example, whether or not the most commonly taught school subjects were, in fact, "basic" to the skills and knowledge needed by the student for the world of tomorrow. It had to consider the relation between the processes which enable teachers to stimulate student response and growth and the subjects actually taught in the classroom. It needed to discuss the extent to which a teacher's preparation in a discipline or subject matter area affects his or her performance in the classroom. It had to consider the contributions which such fields as sociology, psychology, and linguistics make to the identification and resolution of school and community problems. And it needed to clarify the relations between the best current research in a given field and the curriculum materials for the schools derived from such research. To what extent, if any, for example, can the educational needs and goals established by the community and the local school be in conflict with the best and most accurate knowledge about such matters as language use?

The Task Force could not accept easy definitions of the basic studies based on Federal funding in the past decade. It could not be content to identify only subjects widely taught in the schools. It could not rest with a definition which failed to recognize the enormous expansion of knowledge itself and of the ways of knowing.

The definitions finally agreed upon are perhaps less important than the process which produced them: experts from a variety of fields concerned with the betterment of public education regularly and rigorously examining the content of teacher education and school programs.

While acknowledging the fundamental importance of giving students the ability to read, write, and compute, the Task Force has asserted that a wide variety of traditional and emerging disciplines play significant roles in making education a powerful and personally satisfying experience for youngsters and adults. Some fields contribute directly to the school curriculum--they are school subjects; some provide the tools which allow teachers to understand and motivate youngsters to learn; some identify and relate the needs of the community to the school program. Each, in the broadest sense, is a "Basic Study," basic to the full success of the educational enterprise. In this broad sense, there is scarcely any organized body of knowledge or set of skills which cannot help to make the school a better place for students to learn to know themselves and the world around them.

Members of the Basic Studies Task Force were led to ask in what ways fields like anthropology or political science or economics make direct

or indirect contributions to the improvement of student learning in the schools. What disciplines outside his or her own field, for example, must the teacher of English or Spanish bring to his or her classroom?

The answers to such questions can help educators and classroom teachers cooperate to create more effective pre- and in-service programs for teachers. The answers can lead specialists in any commonly taught discipline to draw upon the resources of other fields in order to improve the content and conduct of the school program. The answers, moreover, should help teachers and administrators in the schools to understand better how deeply involved in the life of the school are the community which it serves and those institutions of higher education which nurture it.

Such questioning should characterize any academic department, college of education, teacher's lounge, or office of administration. Defining "Basic Studies" is, in effect, defining far more than the subjects to be taught in school. It is defining the relationships between subject matter fields and the goals and means of education. It forces educators to examine the ways in which particular subjects, whether or not they are in the curriculum itself, can make the school a more viable educational setting.

The work of the Task Force has importance, then, essentially as a model process. The process of continuing review must characterize the Office of Education, State boards of education, and those planning school programs and the education of teachers.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

I. We recommend the development of a national system of Regional Basic Studies Councils which will constitute the design and evaluation elements for specified Office of Education programs. See pp. 16-17.

II. We recommend that the Office of Education or National Institute of Education, as appropriate, provides funds to permit those involved in and affected by the disciplines commonly associated with the basic studies to engage more regularly in the assessment and strengthening of the contributions of their fields to the process of education.

III. We recommend that professional associations representing the basic studies consider cooperative efforts as a major opportunity for influencing educational policy in the public schools. We urge that direct funding be available to these organizations to assist them in strengthening their commitment to improving public education.

IV. We recommend that joint agency planning be implemented to draw upon the basic studies in the design and evaluation of programs.

V. We recommend that mechanisms be developed for assessing the state of knowledge of the disciplines among in-service teachers and that local and State budgetary mechanisms be developed for ensuring that the continuous education of teachers can take place for personal and professional growth.

VI. We recommend that mechanisms be established for gathering data about potential audiences for education in the basic studies both within and outside of existing institutions in order to improve career advising and training in the basic studies.

NOTES

[1] Harry Finestone and Michael Shugrue (eds.), Prospects for the 70's: English Departments and Multidisciplinary Study (New York : Modern Language Association, 1973).

[2] Higher Education Act of 1965 (as amended); National Defense Education Act, Title XI, 1966 (as amended).

[3] Educational Professions Development Act, 1967 § 531 (d).

[4] B. O. Smith and others, Teachers for the Real World (Washington, D. C.: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1969), pp. 7-8.

[5] Lewis N. Pino, Nothing But Praise (Lincoln, Nebr.: University of Nebraska Printing and Duplicating Service, 1972), p. 15.

[6] J. N. Hook, One Dollar Gets you Ten: TTT as an Educational Catalyst (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1972), p. 15.

[7] National Advisory Council on Education Professions Development, Windows to the Bureaucracy (Washington, D.C.: the Council, 1971), pp. B13-15.

[8] Michael Novak, The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics (New York: Macmillan, 1971), p. 48.

[9] William Bouwsma, "Learning and the Problem of Undergraduate Education," ACLS Newsletter, 21:5; October 1970.